

入江君人

KIMIHITO IRIE

神さまの

いない

日曜日

KAMISAMANO
INAI
NICHYOURI



ファンタジア文庫

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Kami-sama no Inai Nichiyoubi - Volume 01

Chapter 00-01 (Incomplete)

Table of Contents

- 1. [Novel Illustrations](#)
- 2. [Prologue](#)
- 3. [Chapter 1 - For Those Who Love Legends](#)
- 4. [Afterword](#)

Novel Illustrations

These are the illustrations used in volume 1:



Cover



Front and
Back Cover





Page 049



Page 085



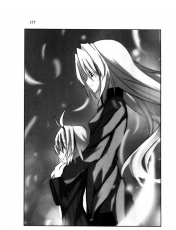
Page 103



Page 145



Page 165



Page 177



•

Page 201



•

Page 227



•

Page 245

Prologue

God created the world on Monday.

God separated order and chaos on Tuesday.

God defined the numbers on Wednesday.

God allowed the flow of time on Thursday.

God looked over at every corner of the world on Friday.

God rested on Saturday.

Then, on Sunday, God—

The place was like a natural cemetery.

Originally, the place was a lush, fertile hill, but at present it was densely covered by overgrowth, with boulders scattered all over. Arid wind blew through the remnants of living beings, a tree stood straight in solitude on the bald hill, not a presence of a single human could be sighted.

Just to restore the forest to eighty percent of its former glory would take over a hundred years. That was how barren the land was.

In a corner of this piece of land, a Grave Keeper was currently waving her shovel with great efforts.

The job of a Grave Keeper, of course, is to maintain the cemetery.

The girl continued to try her best to dig, using her entire strength, she stabbed the shovel into the ground, then used it as a lever to scoop up the soil into the basket.

Ai, who was kneeling down on the ground, exhaled out, proceeding to gaze at the western horizon. Reflected from her sight, she could see the sun setting, the breezing wind also began to feel cold.

Ai, with an expression full of resentment, looked at the setting sun. After a while, she forced herself to get out of the pit. The surrounding area was composed of similar looking graves.

Taking a glance at the countless graves, Ai muttered to herself,

“Job done!”

She carried the equipment down the hill. At the foot of the hill was a wooden cabin and a well, which Ai used to clean the equipment. These tools had been used for a whole day, as such they were dirtied black.

Ai used her hands to soak the equipment in water, then grabbed a stool and a brush while rolling up her sleeves. After a good while of preparations, Ai washed the equipment clean. Washing away the sediments, laying it out in the sun, also lubricating various parts of the equipment. She groaned as she swiftly carried out her tasks. The pail, the sickle and the hoe were sparkling under the rays of light.

At last, Ai lifted up her partner.

The shovel.

The shovel had a simple design. A wooden shaft with a silver metallic head, on the surface patterns of trees and roots were engraved, an evidence supporting her claim as a Grave Keeper.

Ai carefully washed her beloved shovel.

The well, the wooden cabin, and the equipment were all provided to her by the villagers. In response to their goodwill, she treasured them dearly. Finally, she stored the tools in the cabin.

What was left on her hand was just the shovel.

“See you later, everyone.”

She closed the door with a *bang*. The tools sparkled for one last time.

After tidying things up, Ai checked her appearance. Touching the cheeks with her hand, she discovered that her face was smeared with mud, her fingers were also dirtied. Sighing, she took off her shoes and shirt, and loosened her hair.

Her beautiful golden hair were like another sun in time of dusk.

Ai only used the water to clean out the filth sticking to her hair and skin, resulting in it changing from red to a golden luster, comparable to a gem, buried

in the ground for eons, being unearthed.

But the action of her washing herself, compared to when she washed the tools, was much more hasty.

She complained that the water in her mouth was too cold, and ignoring the fact that there were still bubbles left over on her body, Ai put on her clothes.

First, she put her delicate hands and feet into the gloves and shoes accordingly.

Then, she tied the iron hammer, spoons, and all sort of tools with her leather belt.

Next, she attached the hook and some other accessories onto her outer coat.

Afterwards, she combed her hair, put on a straw hat, and pulled it down to her chin level.

Finally, she picked up the shovel, turned around and flipped it over, then placed it on her shoulder.

Like this, Ai finished wearing her Grave Keeper outfit.

The sun was setting in the far distant mountain, signaling Ai to go back home.

Today, the digging of the 47th grave had been started, hoping that it will be finished by tomorrow—

Strolling along the mountain path, she danced around singing happily. She continued to flip over the shovel, incessantly causing noises, while humming as she walked towards the pitch-black mountain path fearlessly, and jumping as she advanced forward. There was no way Ai could tumble over because she knew every nook and cranny of this place, even what kind of bird lived on a certain tree.

Not much time later, after finishing her trip, what entered her vision was the scene of the night sky and a village. The never-ending fields stretched far and wide, light was shining out from the households. A long and narrow sized village

was being concealed between the mountain valleys.

Ai had stopped humming.

She then cleared her throat, and proceeded to inspect her attire—are the clothes tucked in, are the shoelaces untied, is there any speck of dust on her?

Lastly, she slapped her face to encourage herself, eliminating the expression on her face.

Grave Keepers are the protectors of death, the envoys of death, and lastly—the gods of death themselves.

Ai firmly believed that the expression a Grave Keeper ought to have was an expressionless face.

Making up her resolution to maintain dignity, she then walked towards the village.

She straightened her back, lowered her line of sight, and as her shoes were made up of iron and leather, step-by-step traces were created on the muddy ground. Carrying the shovel on her shoulder like a gun, exposing the imposing insignia on the shovel's head, though she was small, she still exuded an oppressive atmosphere.

Suddenly, an old man lifted his head up from within the field. Ai pretended to have looked by accident, using her eyes to take a quick glance at him. The person in question was of course the blacksmith Yuuto, who helped create tools for everybody.

After a brief moment of watching, the head immediately disappeared from the field. Ai thought to herself that he must have been frightened by her aura, and as such, she raised her fist up high representing that of a victor.

"Hey~~everybody listen, Ai-chan is back~~"

However, Yuuto came back quickly, moreover, along with his shouts, almost ten villagers sprang out. Each of them wore ragged clothes and trousers, and a straw hat atop their heads. Mixed in the crowd were villagers both young and old, the majority either had wounds all over their bodies, were blind, or were handicapped. Those who didn't tend to the fields also appeared, this is how

bustling the fields were in spring.

Apparently, everyone was waiting for Ai's return.

Ai unhappily twisted the corner of her mouth. Nevertheless, she immediately stopped in her tracks. Lightly bending her knees and bowing down, then heaving up her shovel, she fluently recited the lines of a Grave Keeper:

"Good evening everyone, today also I have upheld my dignity as a Grave Keeper, assisting the living to ensure that they lead a happy life..."

But as she finished saying up till that part, her voice was drowned out by the villagers' clamor.

"Why are you so late?! Didn't we say you need to come back before dark?" "Are you hungry?" "Right, there's still some left, eat up!" "There's lemonade too!"

She couldn't maintain her dignified posture for any moment longer. The villagers casually caressed her head, an old lady was handing out snacks, and an old man was eagerly looking forward to talk to her.

Ai sighed while in the middle of the crowd.

"I don't want either snacks or lemonade! All the food I eat has already been prepared at home. Please don't mind me, and continue living your life."

Ai strongly asserted the Grave Keepers' zeal, but the villagers only perfunctorily nodded in accordance, not willing to release her.

"You people!"



At that moment, a shout could be heard from afar, a young man was walking up the terracing while waving his hand.

It was Yohki.

Ai caught a sight of the reliable helper and let out a grin.

“What are you all doing? Spoiling Ai! Well well, don’t just crowd around here, please get the work done and go back home!”

Everyone presented at the scene looked guilty. After all, on the notice board last week, this was posted: “Please don’t feed the Grave Keeper.”

Anyhow, it had already happened. Ai firmly stood beside Yohki and gazed at the villagers, those who quickly noticed her gaze had already fled, for the remaining were too afraid to leave her sight.

In the end, there were only the two of them left. Ai triumphantly hummed as she raised her head up to look at Yohki as they laughed away happily.

“Okay, Ai...no. Grave Keeper!”

However Yohki donned the same cold eyes, like when he previously confronted the villagers, as he looked at Ai.

“Haven’t I said not to accept food from others! Why are you such a glutton...?!”

Ai couldn't overlook this sentence, after all she had clearly rejected already. Therefore, she intolerably said,

"I zid fezUSD erefyng! Fid fitdow ze zsasefent!"

I did refuse everything, please withdraw the statement—that's what Ai was trying to say, but nobody understood the meaning because her mouth was stuffed full.

"..."

Yohki's icy cold gaze gave her a chill.

Ai put up a squirrel-like troubled expression, and in the next moment swallowed down whatever was in her mouth, then continued her excuse, "These are unforeseen circumstances."

"...These too?"

Perhaps it was because of Ai's funny appearance that he didn't get angry, but Yohki just silently pointed at her hand. In her right hand was a cup of lemonade, in the left were a huge amount of snacks. The body does not lie.

For the shovel, which represents the owner identity as a Grave Keeper, was stuck in the ground.

"You! Really!"

Yohki with his hands akimbo, loudly scolded. This was the well known "Angry Yohki" that every villager feared, since it was boring and lengthy.

But Ai just treated it like a passing wind, in through one ear and out through the other. Her mind was filled with unrelated topics. She intently stared at the artistic black eyes and beautiful-shaped ears of his.

Ai truly thought that Yohki was really beautiful, among the people in the realm of mortals. His black hair and eyes were very ordinary, yet when one looked at the person as a whole, it gave off the feeling of a brilliant temperament.

"Yohki is so beautiful."

"Huh?"

The scolding Yohki couldn't help but be at a loss for words.

“...Ai, have you listened to what I said?”

“Yes! When I grow up, I will be Yohki’s bride.”

“You didn’t listen at all!”

Yohki seemingly having a headache, crouched down and used his hand to knead at his eyebrows. Ai, recognizing that she was out of his field of vision, quickly took the opportunity to clear everything in her hands.

Just when the last piece of cracker entered her mouth, another voice could be heard.

“Hello~~What are the two of you doing~~?”

Turning around, she saw that a young woman was walking over along the village’s path.

“Ah, it’s Anna! I’m back!”

When Ai noticed her, her face brimmed with a smile as she ran over. Discarding the dignity of a Grave Keeper, her whole body was enveloped in Anna's embrace, dancing around happily.

The woman was a dazzling person. She had black hair and black eyes, with heavy makeup applied on her face, along with perfume which was sprayed onto her body.

“Uh...!”

“What’s up, Ai?”

Ai, who was formerly in her embrace, suddenly backed off. She pinched her nose and said,

“Anna, you stink.”

Anna knitted her brows upon hearing this, and with a smile on her face, she struck a fist at Ai’s head.

“Ai~~? This is just perfume! You understand? It’s the smell of perfume! Don’t call it stink!”

Ai with tearful eyes, hurriedly apologized. Even if Yohki said a million words, Ai wouldn’t be scared. On the contrary, she would feel scared just from a hit from

Anna.

“Anyways, it’s too early for you. You will understand the ways of adults when you grow up.”

Ai also very much agreed on this point, but the fear still lingered in her mind, hence she didn’t say it out loud, instead she just silently pondered.

Why perfume, why makeup? Compared to the fragrance of flora and fauna, Ai preferred humans’ original scent. She liked the kind of smell that could be sensed with that outmoded fashion when people hugged each other.

She had once asked the women of the villages before, but all of them revealed an awkward smile, saying vaguely, “You will know soon.” Will she be able to understand it in the future? No matter what, Ai thought that she would still be unable to understand.

However...

“Anna, I am back. You’re beautiful as always. Did you change the perfume? Such a nice smell.”

Yohki habitually kissed Anna, and praised her perfume. Anna let out a smiling face, then held onto Yohki’s hand.

It was always like this.

Ai stretched her green eyes wide open, and finally realized something.

“My goodness!”

Due to her childish jealousy, she pounced and interrupted the two, who were flirting.

“Wait, Ai! You will ruin my makeup. What’s the matter?”

“I would like to talk, Anna. I would like to talk with you—”

Ai told Anna what she had done today. Including the fact that she had started digging all forty-seven graves, found a new type of owl, furthermore, she also told her the story about the villagers giving her snacks.

“Afterwards, I had a talk with Yohki.”

For Ai, the scolding counted as just a normal conversation.

“Oh, what were you guys talking about?”

“I will tell you, Yohki will marry me!”

Yohki, who was at the scene, suddenly choked. Anna then spoke in a low tone of voice,

“...Aiya, you already have me, not sparing even a kid this young.”

“No, definitely not! You are mistaken!”

Yohki desperately explained in a disorderly manner. Anna looked at her panic-stricken husband, giving him a smile and spoke, “It is just a joke.” Then she proceeded to turn her head around and spoke to Ai,

“Ai can’t marry Yohki, because Yohki and I are already married.”

“Yeah, speaking of which, you are right.”

“About this point, do you understand now? Don’t go spouting nonsense.”

“How about I marry Anna?”

“...I don't have a single clue as to why you are asking me this.”

“You don’t know, Anna? There are some countries that allow same-sex marriage.”

“I don’t want you to show off your knowledge...anyways, I understand. I know that you like us very much, you like us so much that you want to marry us...but the thing is—if you want to express it, there are more appropriate ways for doing so.”

Anna gulped. Unknowingly, tension was building up between the two young people.

“You, with us...how should I phrase it...?”

Speaking up to this point, Anna stopped talking, and looked at her husband who was beside her.

“—Like parents with their daughter, right?”

“Wrong.”

Ai quickly replied.

“My mother is already dead, originally I was the one who dug her grave. My mother said that my father is the Man-Eating Toy, and that someday he will come and see me.”

Ai said this while laughing, not showing even the slightest negative emotions. The two sorrowfully looked at her.

“Ai.”

Anna hugged Ai, causing her to be shocked and rooted on the spot.

“Ai, your only mother is Alfa, your father will come to find you someday...but they are not here at present, therefore for a while...just for a while, can you let me be your mother?”

Anna spoke while trembling.

“...Anna as my mother?”

Ai, seemingly shocked, repeated the words once more. “Anna okaa-san” — these words sounded very sweet, and lightly seeped into her mind.

“Anna okaa-san!”

Ai happily danced around, and threw herself at Anna. She realized something as she turned her face away.

“Then Yohki is the father?”

“Should be.”

Father! Mother!

Ai resembled a kid receiving a present right now, incessantly shouting out Anna okaa-san and Yohki otou-san.

“...Well, should we head back home? I am all hungry now.”

Following up, Ai shouted, “Hungry!” Thereupon, she clutched Anna’s hand on the right, and Yohki’s on the left. She joyfully laughed between the two of them, quickening their steps on their walk to home. A small distance away from the village, there was a small house. That was the place that the three of them were returning to.

“Correct, Ai...”

Yohki pointed at Ai's hand and asked,

“Your shovel?”

Ai's right hand was holding onto her mother's hand, and left hand onto her father's. While both of her hands were busily occupied with her significant people, she had completely forgotten about the Grave Keeper's symbol.

Chapter 1 - For Those Who Love Legends

Chapter 1: For Those Who Love Legends[\[edit\]](#)

On Monday, God created the world.

God created “nothing” in a place where even the concept of nothing did not exist.

On Tuesday, God separated the order and the chaos.

God defined freedom and liberty, thus deciding the direction the world would travel in.

On Wednesday, God sorted the order of every number.

His tedious work brought about beautiful diversity.

On Thursday, God allowed for time to flow.

Numbers grew explosively, giving birth to the first humans. [\[1\]](#)

On Friday, God looked at every corner of the Earth.

Over millions of years of searching, God found this world to be ideal and had come to love it.

On Saturday, God rested.

Billions of years passed. [\[2\]](#)

Then, on Sunday God abandoned the world.

Fifteen years ago, God suddenly appeared in front of humanity and told them: “Heaven is too crowded with people and this world will come to its end very quickly. Ah, I’ve made a mistake.” [\[3\]](#)

God just left behind these words before vanishing into thin air.

However the humans only wanted to sing and rejoice for spring while nature around them trembled in fear. Though humans had only existed in this world for less than a million years, this was their first time meeting God, but God was

certainly already saying farewell.

From that day onward, humans no longer died.

Even if their hearts stopped, and their bodies festered, the dead would continue on with their activities.

From that day onward, humans were not born.

It was as if the factory that made humans stopped production, never to make another human being.

Soon, in the time after God left the Earth, people began screaming and vomiting blood - living on the verge of death.

The number of living quickly and suddenly decreased; the whole world filled with corpses.

Eventually, the Grave Keepers appeared.

God sent the Grave Keepers to mankind as one last miracle.

Grave Keepers did not grow old and nor did they know fatigue.

God gave them perfect bodies beyond man's wildest imaginations. He instructed them to build tombs, and bury the dead that still wandered the world, to avoid disturbing people's everyday lives. It was only after this, that people could peacefully sleep.

"To let the living sleep – that is the job of the Grave Keepers"

Youki had already repeated this bedtime story hundreds of times and the ending went like this: "Ai, you are a Grave Keeper; you need to protect everyone so they can sleep peacefully." Every time, they would always arrive on this line of the bed time story.

"Ai?"

But tonight they only reached this point.

The room filled with treasures.

Like Ai's work, this room was handcrafted by the villagers. Everything in the room, including the bed, cabinets, study table, furniture embellishments and various other little things were all handcrafted. Things from a stuffed teddy bear

to a new small shovel were all neatly arranged together in the room. In the center, Ai breathed happily as she slept. With a murmured “Dear me”, Youki closed the book. “Sleep well, Ai. Thank you for all your hard work today.”

Youki pulled up her blanket, patted her head and quietly left the room.

“She’s asleep?”

Asked Anna, who was washing the dishes in the kitchen. She was wearing an apron and had her hair tied up so it would not interfere. She also sounded unexpectedly dissonant.

That night’s dinner may have had small portions but it certainly was tasty, there were 2 meat dishes and after dinner, there was even cake for dessert.

“We only got halfway through the story before she fell asleep, it must be because she ate so much today...I am very thankful.”

Youki put his hand on his wife’s shoulder, thanking her for her hard work. From the colourful look of today’s dishes, it could easily be seen that a lot of work had been put into making them. She turned her head around and asked: “Youki, is this really what’s best? I know it lets me be a mother...but is this really what’s best?”

“Of course it’s what’s best. Weren't all the villagers also in favour of this?”

Youki showed a warm smile and stroked his wife’s shoulder.

“I'm grateful for you accepting the proposal. Being a mother is a problematic role.”

“No way, it's okay with me. Because I love you. To be able to have a child in these times, it truly is like a dream... I am so lucky right now that it is starting to make me afraid. However...”

Anna showed an uneasy expression.

“To both of you... does this situation count as “lucky”^[4]?”

“What does that mean?”

“Lately I’ve been thinking... what would be the most “happy”^[5] to you and Ai.”

Anna seemed to avoiding the question^[6]; she took Youki’s hand off her

shoulder, walked up to the window, pulled aside the curtain and gazed out into the night sky.

“Someday, you two are going to leave this village. Holding hands, leave down all the deceit... Then, in about four or five years of life in a new place, Ai will have grown up. I'm sure that she would be beautiful. She is going to love you as well...this is naturally...the best way to happiness.”

“You’re talking about this matter again.” [7]

Youki let his wife turn her body around before kissing her.

“This route does not take into account the most important prerequisite...the one I love isn’t Ai, but you.”

“You say that now, but after a few years, who knows? Also, in the future I will just grow older[8]; on the other hand, Ai will grow more beautiful...”

“Anna.”

Youki hugged her tightly, wanting to express his views through his attitude.

“Anna, trust me, no matter whether you are sick or healthy, I will always love you, respect you, and remain sincere to you.”

He said this and kissed Anna’s hand.

“...When we die, let us slept together.”

In this world where the dead remain wandering, Youki left this single vow – saying that when they die they would not remain wandering, but instead, share the same tomb.

“... Mm.”

After hearing Anna’s reply, Youki hugged her once more. It was only at this point that he felt his stiff arms and body soften.

“Have you calmed down?”

“Mm.”

While saying this, Anna lightly escaped his hug. It wasn’t the same as his normal embrace.[9] Anna casually picked up her bag, organized her things and

got ready to go home.

“Do you want to go back?”

“Mm. Originally I wished to stay overnight... but, I can no longer do that anymore.”

Anna then added: “After all, you already said that you wanted me to trust you.” Weakly, she smiled. Her smile made Youki feel a good deal of heartache, and he could not resist saying: “...If it’s just for one night, then the villagers won’t...”

“You can’t.”

Anna immediately interrupted him.

“If you say these kind of things, how can you become a role model for everyone? I’ll be leaving now.”

Anna tightly clenched her husband’s hand, and then opened the door.

At the same time, the door to the kid’s room opened.

“...Anna... are you going back now?”

Ai rubbed her sleepy eyes while standing there.

“Ah, did we wake you up?”

While the two adults were looking at each other in confusion, Ai took advantage of the situation and ran over.

“...Anna, I don’t want you to leave...” [\[10\]](#)

She spoke these words like a kid, before wrapping her entire body around Anna’s stomach.

“Wait, wait a moment! Can you not put on that expression like you’re going to cry? Don’t we do this all the time already?”

“But Anna... today you are obviously someone's mother...”

Her drowsiness and the exciting night she had made Ai scared to be alone.

With no other choice left, Youki stretched out his left hand onto Ai’s shoulder and said: “Ai, don’t cause any trouble for Anna. Don’t you normally sleep alone?”

“But mama... you are supposed to... sleep on the same bed with your family.”

Youki took a deep sigh.

”Ai.”

When Youki becomes angry, his voice becomes coarse, and his hand strength also becomes firmer.

“Ai, what’s wrong? You aren’t the type of child who is spoiled, right? Don’t be so stubborn.”

“Ai, return to bed!”

But, Ai just continued to ignore them and kept her head bowed without saying a word.

The amateur parents didn’t know whether it was ok to hit or shout at their child and the mother froze in shock and pain.

“Ai, it hurts! Let go, my make-up will...”

“Ai, this is going too far!”

Youki made his decision and intervened by firmly gripping Ai’s shoulder.

At that moment, Ai widened her two green eyes and glanced at the two adults.

Her eyes were filled with tears, but it look dry and pain due to hunger[\[11\]](#).

What kind of expression was she giving off?

Youki was startled by the wave of chills he felt. He knew something significant had just happened, but he had no clue what is it.

He had experienced this kind of situation in the past, but he had never seen Ai behave this way before. The Ai he had saw was more sensible, more free-spirited, could always understand what adults wanted, had her own opinions and wasn’t petulant. In the past she had been scolded, but had never needed to be beaten; she had been annoying, but never truly unbearable. Youki had always thought she was this kind of child.

This child was now testing his patience, acting annoying and using her whole body to express her desires.

Youki knew that he must act now. He knew that the decisions he made in the past had been accumulating to this moment and he must act right now. But, he couldn't; all he could do was stand there motionless, clenching his fists.

After a long pause, time seemed to start moving again, though it wasn't like thawing snow, rather it was like something rotting or disintegrating.

Ai's entire body emitted a disheartened look and she slowly released Anna from her grasp, as the strength in her body was slowly drained away. Youki saw that the situation was already over, yet his body still refused to move.

Just as the last droplet of light fell from Ai's moist eyes--

The air beside her started to move.

Anna gently knelt down and hugged Ai.

In the past, when she spoke, she would fear crinkling her clothes or smudging her make-up but, now, she didn't have the slightest worry about these things, displayed by the fact that she was holding Ai in her arms.

This action was just like a real mother.

"Ai."

Her voice was calm, making her sound like a different person.

The despair in Ai's heart that left Youki quite, quite helpless immediately vanished without a trace amid Anna's hugging and shouting.

"Mama can't sleep together with you."

Anna gently touched Ai, who frowned with dissatisfaction.

"But I will always be with you. I will always, always be your mother, okay?"

"But..."

"Good grief, you don't believe me? You're already this old, and you still ask me to sleep with you..."

Upon hearing this, Ai seems to be embarrassed and her cheeks blushed red while she wriggled her body.

Anna urged Ai not to move as she pulled out her handkerchief and wiped the

tears and mucus off Ai's face. This action seemed to make Ai feel even more embarrassed, so she took the handkerchief out of Anna's hand and wiped her own face.

"Are you alright?"

"... I'm fine now."

"Can you sleep by yourself now?"

"Yes."

"Really? Ah, right, we might as well get Youki to sleep with you."

"No! I'm fine! Good night!"

Ai said this while rushing back into her room. Anna didn't worry as she watched her daughter leave.

"... So what is the current situation?"

Youki stretched his neck as he finally found the strength to move. Without looking at him, Anna said: "... In other words, at that exact moment, I became her mother."

"What do you mean?"

"You still don't understand? You are too unreliable as a father."

"I am truly ashamed of myself."

"Hehehe, it doesn't matter, one day you will also understand."

"I hope so, ah..."

In the end, Youki couldn't do anything—this thought made him feel so powerless and regretful.

"Don't you know? When a family forms, the father is always the last to know. The first one to know is always the mother who is pregnant with her growing belly, and the father is always the last one to realize. That's why this is very normal, so you don't need to worry."

After saying this to comfort Youki, Anna smiled and walked out of the cabin, without the slightest hint of unease or embarrassment on her face.

Youki inexplicably felt that she had ditched the two of them, so he felt lonely.

He reluctantly shook his head and began to clean the glasses and bottles of wine left on the table. He realized that the glass in his hand felt a little bit heavy and after taking a closer look, it turned out that the glass still contained some leftover wine.

Youki looked at the glass and saw his own reflection; he saw his own heart and how it's purity had been corrupted by the sins he had committed.

After a bit of hesitation, Youki drank what was left in this glass.

He then took the wine bottle, poured himself another full glass and drank it all in one mouthful.

Ai had a mother; Anna and himself had a daughter. All the villagers approved of this situation, and he was grateful for that.

But, even so, why was it that this wine tasted so sour?

Changing the cups, he drank another glass, but it still tasted foul. No, the foul taste wasn't from the wine, but the person drinking it.

The bottle was now empty but Youki did not feel even slightly intoxicated.

He didn't want to open another bottle, so he decided to go to sleep, passing Ai's room on the way to his own.

With his entire body feeling as if it was being attracted to something, he stood in front of Ai's room, opened the door slightly and looked in to see the small Grave Keeper sleeping happily.

After seeing her like this, Youki felt a sense of relief before closing the door again.

"Ai..."

He didn't say goodnight, but instead said:

"...I'm very sorry..."

Translator's Notes[[edit](#)]

1. [↑](#) I think this is what it is telling me, although I don't know.
2. [↑](#) This says billions of light years passed, at least I think it does... but that is a measure of distance and makes no sense
3. [↑](#) "screwed up" is probably more accurate here... but I don't really think God would say that.
4. [↑](#) the original term can also mean happy/euphoia/bliss/satisfy
5. [↑](#) the same term as lucky above
6. [↑](#) not very accurate but better than previous version
7. [↑](#) It sounds more natural/better in Chinese, trust me.
8. [↑](#) No freaking dur
9. [↑](#) re-translate needed
10. [↑](#) It says I don't want you to go back here, but leave sound better in English while still keeping the meaning.
11. [↑](#) mentally

Afterword

Afterword[\[edit\]](#)

I've always wanted to write about miracles.

I've always wanted to paint with sweeping brushstrokes [\[1\]](#) stories of grand destinies: the kind like the sun that marches tirelessly down as it sets, the kind as confused and chaotic as a fairy tale's conclusion, the kind as implacable as the asphalt we tread underfoot. While I can't tell if I've succeeded in this or not, at the very least I've put pen to paper, and finally finished this story.

I hope all of you enjoyed reading this very much.

Hello, readers; nice to meet you. I am Kimihito Irie.

This tale of miracles was written with the above thoughts in mind, and was lucky enough to win the Grand Prize in the 21st Fantasia Awards. Then it was published. When I received the news that night, I could only feel that this whole experience was more miraculous itself; and this thought took root inside of my mind and tickled me [\[2\]](#) to a good while of laughter. Indeed, I had never thought that my life could be more strange and wonderful than a story I myself had written.

But reality isn't that simple, and it didn't end just with me receiving the congratulations. The days to follow were thus spent amid a great frenzy of activity.

Under the editor's direction, I amended, kept the same, or revised already-revised sections; and in this way, half a year's time receded in the blink of an eye, bringing me here to this day.

In the course of our journey together—no, even before then—both this book and I constantly received the help and support of numerous people.

There's Editor-in-Chief K^[3], that goes without saying; and as for the others, there's illustrator Shino-sensei, the judging committee, my parents, my ancestors, friends, living people, dead people—and the one reading this right now, you.

I want to take this opportunity to thank these people from the depths of my heart.

Thank you very much.

How should I say this? The feelings of gratitude within me are so strong that I could confuse them for ones of love.

Alright, now that the confession is over, I'll be doing a little advertising. Dragon Magazine gave me a bit of space for a short story in their 2010 3rd Issue, which will be going on sale on the same day as this book, in Japan. It's a separate story describing events which happened to Ai two years ago. I've also heard that I can start working on the second book now. It's just that I'm still not too sure about the actual situation right now (such as, for instance, the first volume having terribly bad sales), so I hope that those of you who liked this book continue to give your support.

In that case, it looks like we'll be meeting again in volume two.

Kimihito Irie

Translation notes^[edit]

1. [↑] The actual verb is “雄寫”, which doesn't seem to exist but probably means something along the lines of “write heroically/masculine-ly”.
2. [↑] In the Chinese this is “this thought even touched my laugh-point”, and refers to the Asian idea of a body having numerous pressure points which, when touched in a certain way, result in physiological changes depending on

the point activated.

3. [↑](#) I don't know if this is common practice, but his/her name is actually omitted and replaced with just a "K".